

BFE

I enjoyed the production of BFE. The overall experience of the play was incredible and has easily become one of my favorite productions so far. There were some areas of the performance that could have used more work or been changed. However, the costumes, the acting, sounds, props, and lighting all contributed to its success for me. Each aspect added its own thing to the performance that made it unique from other performances of BFE.

The sound effects were probably the most engaging aspect of the show for me. The sound effects used in the play really did help it feel more real. The sound of the phone ringing or the tv playing the news. It did not leave much to imagination in its department. However, the use of the music provided some complications on the actors' part. It was difficult to hear what Panny's character was saying a lot of the times due to her having to shout over some of the music. It seemed like the actors were already absent of microphones and the music just added more difficulty. There were times in the play where there was no music or sound effects used at all. And even manipulating the sound like that caused a huge impact on my experience. For example, when Panny was taken, throughout her entire encounter with The Man, there was no music. There were no sound effects. The absence of any sound gave the scene that much more tension.

The lighting of the play was also done well. While the production did not use many different colored lights like most plays do to evoke certain emotions, they found a way of just using standard yellow/white light to give the same effects. It did look like a soft blue light was used at one point. It was the final scene when Panny, Lefty, and Isabelle all sat and just stared at the tv. The dimming of the light and sudden blackness gave off an eerie feeling that was a perfect

way to end. There was one moment when the character, The Man, was standing in front of and threatening Panny and the lights were positioned in a way that an entire shadow was casted in front of him, covering his face and the front of his body. Having read the play, The Man has no real identity beyond being a killer and noticing that shadow, to me, contributed a lot to who his character is.

It is often said that costume designs are the silent language of theatre. I believe this play also follows that concept. Each costume shows the personality of each of the major characters. Panny, the main character, is someone who feels uncomfortable in her own skin. Her mother and society often making her feel like someone who isn't beautiful. In the play, they dress Panny in a simple purple t-shirt that seems to big for her and a pair of oversized faded jeans. They did not put her in a dress or even a nice top because that is not how her character is or how she feels. It is the same with Panny's mother, Isabelle. Isabelle is someone who doesn't leave her home and spends all day watching television and fantasizing about love. She isn't someone who works, she does not even get her own food for herself. Though, her personality is very open and blunt and just a little flamboyant. Thus, she is dressed in a robe for the entirety of the play, and in a pink robe at that. Even something as simple as the color makes a difference. Lefty's costume is more subtle. He's a working man, so for most of the play he's wearing his work jacker. However, he seems to be the only one in the play who knows who he is and who he wants to be. When he's not in his work jacket, he's in a clean button up shirt that he has tucked in his pants. Minor characters, like Evie, also have their personality shown through their costumes. Evie's character even addresses it at one point when mentioning her talents. The Man's costume was to be

expected. The oversized coat and fake pencil mustache is something one thinks of when imaging a 'creeper' or 'pervert'.

I had mixed feeling about the props. Many of the props were simple which left one to use more of their imagination whenever the props were being utilized. The black crates that were used all looked the same, but were able to be used to represent different materials or objects. I really enjoyed Panny using the flashlight at the beginning of the play to describe the metaphor surrounding truth. The use of the flashlights at the very beginning when they were being shined down on Panny gave me a feeling of unease especially when they all clicked off at once, extremely sudden. I was a little disappointed in the way Panny's red tears appeared. I wasn't sure what to expect. I had spent a lot of the time after reading the play wondering 'how are they going to make Panny cry blood on stage?' When imaging it in my head, I pictured it being a slow process of blood appearing. However, in the play, Panny had covered her eyes and the suddenly the were red when she took her hands away. It was different from how I wanted it to go though, without CGI, that effect would be hard to do anywhere. However, for a play with no budget to work with, the production still did well with what they had.

The actors did very well with their parts. I was especially blown away by Isabelle's character. The actor had done such a good job with her performance. The actor had brought so much life to a character who is essentially lifeless. She had also contributed to a lot of the humor to the play and delivered a lot of the jokes flawlessly. The actor who played Lefty also did well, but I enjoyed him even more when paired with Evie's character. The two actors worked together so well and brought so much chemistry onto the stage. Even knowing how their relationship ends I was still hoping everything would work out for them in the end. The two actor had their made

characters so lovable and in a strange way, relatable. And even now, I find myself imaging them working things out together in some other scene in some other play that hasn't been and never will be written. Both Hugo's and Elizabeth's performance helped with a lot of the tension that the plot naturally caused. However, Elizabeth's performance at one point added more tension that surprised me. When Elizabeth interrupts Panny's monologue, the lines she says are at first funny and I felt a little lighter in the moment. However, the sound of Elizabeth yelling and running away was like having cold water dumped on me and the situation Panny is in becomes even more scarier. I did not think Elizabeth's character was capable of causing that. I was on the fence for the most part with the actor who played Panny. It felt as though a lot of her lines were rushed or didn't have as much emotion as I had expected. However, as the play went on, I began to like her performance a little more. Especially with the final scene with her final lines, "Don't look at me Lefty, just don't look". The words had given me such an empty feeling and actually made my chest ache and I had to remind myself that this is just a play.

Of all the plays I have seen that were performed by the UGA theatre, BFE did something all the others didn't. The performance made it feel like something more than an assignment I had to complete. From the very beginning to the very end, I was captivated. No play has ever made me feel what that final scene had made me feel. From Panny's final lines that were delivered beautifully to cringing at the ringing of an unanswered phone and finally, to the unsettling sound of the television static that slowly got louder as the lights got darker until I heard and saw nothing at all. I could never forget the intensity of the feeling that final scene caused and I do not think it could ever be replicated. I again had to remind myself that this was just a play, but the hollow feeling stayed with me, even on the car ride home.